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Advancement of women

Status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 64/138 on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-sixth session a report on the status of the Convention and the implementation of the resolution. It covers the period from 24 August 2009 to 1 July 2011.

* A/66/50.

I. Status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180. It was opened for signature, subject to ratification and for accession at United Nations Headquarters on 1 March 1980 and, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention, entered into force on 3 September 1981.

2. As at 1 July 2011, 187 States had ratified, acceded to or succeeded to the Convention, which reflects no change since the previous report (A/64/342). The list of States parties to the Convention and the dates of deposit of their instruments of ratification, accession or succession to the Convention are available from the website of the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs (<http://treaties.un.org>), along with all declarations, reservations, objections and other relevant information.

3. As at 1 July 2011, 63 States parties had deposited with the Secretary-General instruments of acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, which relates to the meeting time of the Committee. The eight countries accepting the amendment since the submission of the previous report were Albania, Bulgaria, Kuwait, Morocco, Nauru, Poland, Singapore and Spain. The list of States that have accepted the amendment to article 20 of the Convention and the dates of deposit of their instruments of acceptance are available on the website of the Treaty Section.

4. During the reporting period, objections to reservations made by Qatar upon accession were received from the Czech Republic (C.N.815.2009), Estonia (C.N.245.2010), Finland (C.N.248.2010), Ireland (C.N.247.2010), Poland (C.N.256.2010), the Netherlands (C.N.252.2010), Norway (C.N.251.2010), Spain (C.N.825.2009) and Sweden (C.N.259.2010). With respect to the reservations made by Qatar upon accession, communications were received from Mexico (C.N.264.2010) and Portugal (C.N.260.2010). During the reporting period the following States withdrew their reservations: Bahamas (C.N.82.2011), Malaysia (C.N.472.2010), Maldives (C.N.195.2010) and Morocco (C.N.176.2011). The above depositary notifications are available from the website of the Office of Legal Affairs for reference.

II. Status of the Optional Protocol to the Convention

5. By its resolution 54/4, the General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Optional Protocol was opened for signature, subject to ratification and accession at United Nations Headquarters on 10 December 1999 and, in accordance with article 16, paragraph 1, entered into force on 22 December 2000.

6. As at 1 July 2011, 102 States parties had ratified, acceded or succeeded to the Optional Protocol. This represents an increase of four States parties since the submission of the previous report. Those four States parties are: Cambodia, on 13 October 2010; Equatorial Guinea, on 16 October 2009; Guinea-Bissau, on 5 August 2009; and Seychelles, on 1 March 2011. The list of States parties to the Optional Protocol, the dates of deposit of their instruments of ratification, accession or succession, and all

declarations, reservations and other relevant information are also available from the website of the Treaty Section.

III. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

A. Substantive and technical servicing

7. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has responsibility for supporting the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Committee is serviced by the secretariat of the Committee, which comprises the Secretary (P-4), three Human Rights Officers (P-3), one Associate Human Rights Officer (P-2) and one Assistant (General Service).

8. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has ensured that the strong links between the Committee and the intergovernmental machinery responsible for the promotion of gender equality continue to be maintained. The Chair of the Committee participated in the fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in 2010 and 2011, and participated, with other members, in various side events. The Chair also addressed the Third Committee of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth sessions. The Committee's interaction with the United Nations human rights machinery is extremely important for its overall activities, and the Committee benefits greatly from the cooperation of the relevant stakeholders to effectively discharge its mandate.

9. The Committee has taken a consistent interest in the question of the reform of the United Nations gender equality architecture. Prior to the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women regularly briefed the Committee on that and other matters. In addition, UNIFEM held a dialogue with the Committee at its forty-sixth session, held in New York in 2010, on the theme of implementing the Committee's general recommendation on women migrants.

10. Following the establishment of UN-Women, the Committee adopted a statement welcoming the establishment of the new entity and sent a congratulatory letter to its Executive Director. The Chair and members of the Committee also met with the Executive Director on 22 February 2011 to discuss issues of common concern and ways to establish an effective framework for future collaboration and coordination with a view to increasing awareness of the Convention and furthering progress in achieving gender equality and the advancement of women. The Committee also provided input to the UN-Women strategic plan, which integrates the Convention and complements and supports the work of the Committee. The Committee is currently collaborating with UN-Women on two of its draft general recommendations, and UN-Women regularly invites experts from the Committee to participate in expert group meetings and side events convened in conjunction with intergovernmental processes.

11. The Committee has taken full advantage of the opportunities provided by OHCHR, interacting regularly with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Deputy High Commissioner and other senior staff, and has welcomed opportunities for discussion with relevant divisions, branches and sections on issues relevant to the work of the Committee.

12. The Committee meets regularly with special procedures mandate holders, usually at each session, including, during the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences; the Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights; and the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons.

13. The Committee continued to contribute actively to the work of the human rights treaty bodies, especially within the framework of the annual meetings of chairs of treaty bodies and the inter-committee meeting. The Chair and designated members of the Committee participated in the twenty-second and twenty-third meetings of chairs of human rights treaty bodies, which were convened on 1 and 2 July 2010 and 30 June and 1 July 2011, respectively. Committee members also attended the tenth, eleventh and twelfth inter-committee meetings of human rights treaty bodies, which were convened from 30 November to 2 December 2009, from 28 to 30 June 2010 and from 27 to 29 June 2011, respectively. In addition, the inter-committee meeting working group on follow-up to concluding observations, inquiries, visits and decisions met from 12 to 14 January 2011.

14. Representatives of the Committee also participated in meetings with regional partners, including the European Union, the Council of Europe and the French Parliament. Committee members participated in panel discussions held during sessions of the Human Rights Council, and one member participated in a panel discussion organized by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Committee's working group on the joint general comment/recommendation on harmful practices met with the respective working group of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to further discuss the scope and outline of the joint general comment/recommendation on harmful practices. Moreover, both Committees met to discuss the general joint comment/recommendation as well as other issues of common concern. Committee members also participated in various panel discussions organized by other stakeholders, including the Forum on Minority Issues, the Social Forum, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and the Intergovernmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

15. Building on its statement entitled "Towards a harmonized and integrated human rights treaty bodies system" (A/61/38, Part 2, annex 1), adopted at its thirty-fifth session, the Committee has sought, where appropriate, to harmonize its working methods with other treaty bodies. Following the practice of other treaty bodies, it also introduced a procedure to follow up its recommendations in its concluding observations. The Committee now generally identifies two concerns in its concluding observations, requiring priority action on which it requests information from the State party within one to two years. The procedure provides a context in which the Committee can maintain close dialogue with States parties on urgent issues in order to assist them in implementing their treaty obligations under the Convention. The Committee is also reviewing the format, content and length of concluding observations with a view to achieving greater efficiency and impact. The

Committee has aligned its practice with respect to the release date of its concluding observations with that of the other Committees, which strive to release the advanced, unedited versions of the concluding observations, as adopted, on the last day of the session. The Committee has also established a task force on working methods that will greatly assist it in reviewing its working practices, including in the light of the practice of other human rights treaty bodies, and recommendations stemming from the treaty-body strengthening process.

B. Evaluation by the Committee

16. As a result of intensive follow-up efforts by the Committee with respect to 15 States with long-overdue reports, all but 3 States have submitted their reports. Those reports have been considered by the Committee or are scheduled to be considered at upcoming sessions. The three States that have not yet submitted their long-overdue reports, Central African Republic, Comoros and Seychelles, have been scheduled to be considered by the Committee in the absence of their reports. The Committee continues to schedule the reports of 24 States parties for review each year. The Committee has scheduled 32 States to be considered at its fiftieth session (October 2011), fifty-first session (February/March 2012), fifty-second session (July 2012) and fifty-third session (October 2012). Fourteen reports have not yet been formally scheduled. The Committee is aware that it has a slight backlog and is discussing ways to address it. The consideration of combined reports assists greatly in keeping the backlog in check. Most reports submitted consist of combined reports.

17. The Committee is gratified that it continues to attract a wide following within the United Nations system and civil society, including national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations, and that it has been able to interact with the wider human rights framework, including the Human Rights Council, the special procedures mandate holders and other treaty bodies. Its transfer to OHCHR and the holding of sessions in Geneva have enabled the Committee to interact regularly with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and to develop close relationships with Geneva-based United Nations entities and other bodies, such as IPU.

18. The Committee considers that it has made strong efforts to harmonize its practices with those of other treaty bodies. It was one of the first treaty bodies to finalize the treaty-specific reporting guidelines used with the guidelines for the common core document, which are now being implemented by States parties in the context of treaty body reform. It has harmonized its terminology with other treaty bodies and has sought to make its concluding observations more detailed, country-specific and action-oriented. The introduction of headings has made the concluding observations more user-friendly and easier to implement, as national line ministries are able to identify more easily the concerns and recommendations of most relevance to them. The Committee has sought to prioritize and focus on both its concerns and recommendations, and has implemented a bullet format for ease of identifying recommendations in its concluding observations. The Committee also considers that its follow-up procedure, which is based on that of other treaty bodies, has strengthened implementation at the national level.

19. The Committee believes that it has maintained and deepened its relationship with the United Nations mechanisms concerned with the advancement of women, while strengthening its links with the human rights machinery. It believes this has

been facilitated by the fact that it meets once annually at United Nations Headquarters in New York, since this allows it to have regular interaction with UN-Women, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as the many United States-based non-governmental organizations that focus on women's issues. The Committee considers that its annual sessions in New York have helped it to maintain its relationship with the Commission on the Status of Women and ensure its ongoing participation in the development activities of the United Nations and in discussions on women, peace and security.

Fulfilment by States parties of reporting obligations

20. Article 18, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that States parties undertake to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention within one year after its entry into force for the State concerned and thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.

21. Between 15 August 2009 and 1 July 2011, the Secretary-General received the reports (many of which are combined reports) from the following States parties: Andorra, Angola, Austria, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire (initial report), Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti (initial report), Equatorial Guinea, Greece, Grenada (initial report), Guyana, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Lesotho, Mauritius, Mexico, Montenegro (initial report), Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Oman (initial report), Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Serbia, Sri Lanka, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

22. During the reporting period, the Committee held the following four sessions: forty-fifth session, from 18 January to 5 February 2010; forty-sixth session, from 12 to 30 July 2010; forty-seventh session, from 4 to 22 October 2010; and forty-eighth session, from 17 January to 4 February 2011. During those sessions, the Committee considered the reports of 27 States parties and 1 exceptional report. The forty-ninth session will be held from 11 to 29 July 2011, at which an additional eight reports will be considered by the Committee.

Reports awaiting consideration, overdue reports and requests for follow-up reports

23. A total of 46 reports submitted by States parties have yet to be considered by the Committee, 32 of which have been scheduled to be considered at upcoming sessions of the Committee through the end of 2012. Fourteen reports have not yet been formally scheduled.

24. In the light of the reduced backlog of reports awaiting consideration, the Committee initiated a systematic effort to encourage States parties to submit long-overdue reports. On the basis of its decisions 29/I and 31/III (i), it established that it would proceed with consideration of the implementation of the Convention in the absence of a report only as a last resort and in the presence of a delegation. The Committee continued its practice of inviting States parties with long-overdue reports to submit all their overdue reports as a combined report. As a result of that initiative, of the 15 States identified as having long-overdue reports (more than 10 years overdue), 12 States parties submitted their reports, which have since been

considered or are scheduled for consideration. As a result of a decision taken by the Committee at its forty-fourth session, the Secretariat systematically reminds States parties whose reports are five years overdue or more to submit their reports as soon as possible.

25. Currently, the following States parties have not yet submitted their initial reports: Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Comoros, Dominica, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Qatar, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Solomon Islands and Swaziland.

26. Reports that were due on or before 2005 include: Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Central African Republic, Comoros, Dominica, Iraq, Micronesia (Federated States of), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Solomon Islands and Swaziland.

27. Reports that were due between 2006 and 2010 include those for: Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Ireland, Latvia, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Monaco, Philippines, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

C. Working methods of the Committee

28. Taking into account that the General Assembly is striving to limit the length of documentation, the Committee's report no longer includes the concluding observations on the reports of States parties or the decisions on communications; those are published as separate documents and are posted on the OHCHR website.

29. The Committee's overview of its working methods was updated to ensure that its working methods are readily accessible to States parties and others interested in the implementation of the Convention (see CEDAW/C/2009/II/4, annex). The overview is also available on the OHCHR website.

30. The Committee has continued to convene its pre-session working group two sessions in advance of the consideration of a report to ensure that States parties have enough time to respond to their respective lists of issues and questions.

31. The Committee, in the last paragraph of its concluding observations, establishes the due date for the State party's next periodic report. In cases where the next periodic report is overdue or becomes due within a year of the date of consideration, the Committee requests the State party to submit its next report as a combined periodic report. Most reports considered by the Committee are now combined reports.

32. During the reporting period, the Committee focused on ensuring that the concluding observations on the reports of States parties were more user-friendly, concrete and precise, so that they could be implemented more easily at the national level. It should be recalled that at its forty-first session, the Committee decided to adopt the practice of inserting titles (subject headings) in its concluding observations, and agreed on a list of titles which would be applied flexibly and as appropriate for the State party concerned (A/63/38, Part two, annex X). At its forty-seventh session, the Committee decided to provide more focused concerns and

recommendations and introduced a more reader-friendly format for its recommendations, using bullets to highlight the recommendations of the Committee.

33. At its forty-first session, the Committee decided to introduce a follow-up procedure whereby it would include a request to individual States parties in the concluding observations for information on steps taken to implement specific recommendations. At its forty-fourth session, the Committee decided to appoint a rapporteur on follow-up to concluding observations and an alternate. It is noted that a maximum of two recommendations are identified for follow-up. The criteria for follow-up recommendations are that their lack of implementation would constitute a major obstacle to the implementation of the Convention and that implementation would be feasible within the suggested time frame. The follow-up report is also made public and is available on the website of OHCHR. Where possible, the follow-up rapporteur collaborates with the country rapporteur on the assessment of the follow-up report. The rapporteur reports to the Committee at each session, and that report is included in the Committee's report to the General Assembly. At the forty-sixth session, the Committee decided to extend the mandate of the rapporteur on follow-up and the alternate until 31 December 2012. At its forty-seventh session, the Committee decided to include follow-up to concluding observations as a standing item on the agenda.

34. The Committee continued its interaction with the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system that contribute to its work and support the full implementation of the Convention at the national level. It continued to benefit from joint information submitted on countries under consideration by United Nations country teams, and encouraged the entities of the United Nations system to expand this practice and, in particular, to make such information available to the Committee's pre-session working group and undertake follow-up activities on the basis of the Committee's concluding observations at the country level.

35. The Committee continued its practice of meeting informally with non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions wishing to present country-specific information on States parties whose reports were before it, at the beginning of the first and second weeks of the session. The Committee's pre-session working group also provided opportunities for non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions to present written and oral information. General and session-specific information notes for non-governmental organizations and national human rights organizations are regularly posted on the OHCHR website.

36. The Committee continued to emphasize the important role of parliamentarians in the implementation of the Convention and the follow-up to concluding observations and includes a standard paragraph on the role of parliaments in each observation. IPU regularly submits country-specific information on the implementation of the Convention in States parties and organizes regular capacity-building sessions for parliaments on the Convention and its Optional Protocol.

37. The Committee continued its practice of adopting statements on particular events or developments. Those include a statement on gender and climate change adopted at its forty-fourth session (A/65/38, Part one, annex II); statements on the situation in Haiti, the inclusion of Afghan women in the process of peacebuilding, security and reconstruction in Afghanistan, the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, its relationship

with non-governmental organizations and its relationship with parliamentarians, adopted at its forty-fifth session (A/65/38, Part two, annexes II through VI, respectively); a statement on the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), adopted at its forty-sixth session (A/66/38, Part one, annex I); and a statement on the establishment of UN-Women, adopted at its forty-seventh session (A/66/38, Part two, annex V).

38. The Committee adopted at its forty-seventh session a general recommendation on the core obligations of States parties under article 2 of the Convention (*ibid.*, annex III) and a general recommendation on older women and the protection of their human rights (*ibid.*, annex IV). With respect to the joint general comment/recommendation on harmful practices, the Committee has agreed to an outline and the first draft is currently being prepared. The general recommendation on the economic consequences of marriage and its dissolution is in the process of being finalized. The Committee also decided to elaborate a general recommendation on women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as a general recommendation on access to justice at its forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions, respectively. The Committee established a task force to study a working paper on gender equality in the context of displacement and statelessness at its forty-eighth session.

D. Working methods with regard to the Optional Protocol

39. During the reporting period, the Committee continued to carry out its activities under the Optional Protocol to the Convention. The Committee allocates one meeting per session to matters relating to the Optional Protocol for consideration in plenary meeting.

40. The Committee's Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol held five sessions during the reporting period. The Working Group on Communications convenes three times a year for a total of 10 working days. To date, the Working Group has registered 32 communications, 10 of which were registered during the reporting period. Out of the 32 communications, 15 remain open.

41. At its forty-fourth session, held in 2009, the Committee decided to revise its model communication form and adopted a fact sheet on the submission of individual communications. It also took action on communications No. 12/2007 and No. 13/2007, and registered two new cases as communications No. 21/2009 and No. 22/2009. The Committee did not have any information in follow-up to the views of the Committee to consider at that session. At its forty-fifth session, held in February 2010, the Committee considered information in follow-up to views of the Committee and decided to close its follow-up procedure in relation to communications No. 5/2005 and No. 6/2005. At its forty-sixth session, held in July 2010, the Committee decided to register a new case as communication No. 25/2010 and took action on communication No. 18/2008. At its forty-seventh session, held in October 2010, the Committee decided upon the admissibility of communication No. 19/2008 and decided to close its follow-up procedure in relation to communication No. 4/2004, as it was satisfied with the implementation of its recommendation. Follow-up to views on individual communications are summarized in the reports of the Committee to the General Assembly (A/65/38, Part one, annex XII, and A/66/38,

Part two, annex IX). Two requests for inquiries under article 8 of the Optional Protocol were also received by the Committee and registered by the Secretariat pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Committee. There are currently three inquiries pending with the Committee.

IV. Efforts to encourage universal ratification of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention

42. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women (prior to the establishment of UN-Women) and the Executive Director of UN-Women continue to encourage universal ratification of the Convention and the Optional Protocol and ensure acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, which stipulates the meeting time allocated to the Committee. They have encouraged related action in their meetings with delegations, in statements and presentations at United Nations Headquarters, at other duty stations, and at conferences and other forums.

V. Technical assistance provided to States parties

43. Technical assistance and capacity-building activities of OHCHR routinely focus on the Convention, including with respect to the preparation of reports and follow-up to concluding observations, as well as the mechanisms established under the Optional Protocol. During 2010 and 2011, national and regional capacity-building training seminars were organized by OHCHR on the human rights treaty body system, focusing in particular on reporting and follow-up to concluding observations of the Committee as well as other treaty bodies. Some of the seminars are organized with UN-Women as part of the joint workplan between the two entities. Training seminars were conducted in the Gambia, Indonesia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam, involving not only Government officials but also other stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and the media. Capacity-building is considered to be vital to assist States in the implementation of their treaty obligations. OHCHR could do more in that regard but is prevented from doing so by budgetary constraints.

44. Within the framework of its capacity-development programme and as part of its plan of action, UN-Women continues to extend technical assistance for the implementation of the Convention and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and for the implementation of and follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations at the request of States parties. During the reporting period, UN-Women organized a number of regional capacity-building training seminars, which benefited from the contributions of experts of the Committee.

VI. Dissemination of the Convention, its Optional Protocol and information on the work of the Committee

45. OHCHR maintains a page on the Convention and its Optional Protocol and the work of the Committee on its website. The text of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, reports of States parties, lists of issues and questions, responses from States parties, States parties' introductory statements and the composition of delegations presenting reports, the Committee's concluding observations and documents and any other information concerning the Convention, its Optional Protocol, the working methods of the Committee and the meetings of States parties are posted on the website. The Committee's concluding observations, views on communications, general recommendations and other output are also disseminated through the electronic mailing list administered by OHCHR. The Universal Human Rights Index, the electronic research tool maintained by OHCHR that indexes concluding observations of human rights treaty bodies and recommendations of special procedures mandate holders, includes all the outputs of the Committee. The training DVD entitled "The treaty bodies: bringing human rights home", which was updated in 2010, was produced to raise awareness and build capacities of the international human rights community. The DVD presents the work of the United Nations treaty bodies through the core human rights treaties and the corresponding treaty bodies, and is available in all six official languages of the United Nations.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

46. The Committee has made significant efforts to reduce the delay between the submission of reports and their consideration, using efficient working methods, including time management, which it adjusts on the basis of experience. Its efforts to encourage States parties to comply with their reporting obligations, especially where reports are long overdue, have been successful. It has enhanced its interaction with stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention and has actively contributed to the common efforts of all treaty bodies to harmonize the human rights treaty body system, while adopting innovations appropriate to its work. The Committee has continued to develop its jurisprudence through its work under the Optional Protocol, and its follow-up procedure under this instrument has yielded positive results. It has adopted two general recommendations, of which one is nearing completion and with a good start having been made on the other. The Committee has also decided to elaborate two additional general recommendations, and a day of consultation is being organized for one such general recommendation during the forty-ninth session. The Committee is also working on making its concluding observations more focused, relevant and user-friendly. Follow-up to concluding observations has been mostly successful, although additional resources are required on the part of the Committee and the States concerned. Despite the Committee's achievements, it must make greater efforts to encourage the wider implementation of the Convention. Particular efforts are required with respect to the Optional Protocol, as few communications have been submitted.